

AMENDED CLAIMS

IP2004/023032 23 DEC 2005

[received by the International Bureau on 07 March 2005 (07.03.05);
original claim 1 amended; remaining claims unchanged (1 page)]

+ STATEMENT

What is claimed is:

1. A composite comprising:

a fibrous face layer, wherein the face layer has a top surface and a bottom surface opposite the top surface, and wherein the face layer comprises a plurality of legs dependent from the fibrous face layer, and

an adhesive layer having a top surface that corresponds to the bottom surface of the fibrous face layer and is in direct contact with the bottom surface of the fibrous face layer, wherein the legs of the fibrous face layer are anchored in the adhesive layer.

2. The composite of claim 1, wherein a top portion of the fibrous face layer above the top of the adhesive layer has a thickness of about 0.5 mm to about 2.0 mm.

3. The composite of claim 1, wherein a top portion of the fibrous face layer above the top of the adhesive layer has a basis weight of about 100 grams/m² to about 500 grams/m².

4. The composite of claim 1, wherein the adhesive layer is stitch-bonded with yarns and wherein said yarns form the fibrous face layer comprising a plurality of yarn underlaps.

5. The composite of claim 4, wherein said yarns form a fibrous bottom surface comprising a plurality of yarn overlaps and the adhesive layer is disposed between the fibrous face surface and the fibrous bottom surface.

6. The composite of claim 4, wherein the adhesive layer comprises a thermoplastic film that is post-activated to anchor the legs in the adhesive layer.

7. The composite of claim 4, wherein the face layer is substantially fully covered with yarn underlaps.

8. The composite of claim 1, wherein the fibrous face layer comprises a non-woven layer.

STATEMENT UNDER SECTION 19(1)

Independent claim 1 of the above captioned international patent application is amended from "plurality of legs formed from loops dependent therefrom" to --plurality of legs dependent from the fibrous face layer--. This amendment clarifies the location and attachment mode of the legs to the fibrous face layer. These legs are anchored in the adhesive layer.

Amended claim 1 is novel over all of the prior art cited in the International Search Report and Written Opinion. Justesen US 5,902,663 discloses pile materials (2, 2') that are retained by the bottom primary backing layer (3). These pile materials are not *legs dependent on the fibrous face layer*, as claimed in claim 1. Instead, the piles are dependent from the primary backing layer located near the center of the carpet. Kim US 6,503,595 also discloses piles or tufts fibers protruding or dependent from a bottom primary backing, and suffers from the same deficiencies as Justesen. Similarly, Fink US 6,051,300 discloses piles or tufts (10) dependent or protruding from primary backing layer (5) located near the bottom of the carpet, as shown in Figs. 1-3, not *legs dependent from the fibrous face layer* as claimed in the present invention. Mizutami US 2002/0028624 A1 and Murata US 4,576,840 both describe pile fabric/carpet and suffer from the same defect as the other references. Sidles US 4,888,228 does not even have a fibrous face surface, claimed in claim 1.

Amended claim 1 possesses inventive step over these references, because the claimed composite represents, among other things, a new composite usable as carpeting or floor covering. Conventional floor coverings utilize thick fibers and/or heavy and relatively stiff yarns that are weaved into and out of a stiff bottom primary backing substrate. The legs recited in claim 1 depend on the fibrous face layer itself, and the legs are then anchored into

an adhesive backing layer. Since no weaving is required the inventive composite can be made more efficiently and considerably less expensive.

Claims 2-29 depend directly or indirectly from claim 1 and therefore should be patentable as written.

Additionally, none of the cited prior art discloses the elements of the other two independent claims 30 and 39 presented in the above captioned application. Namely, none of the cited prior art discloses that the bottom surface of the face layer be altered to increase its surface area in contact with the adhesive layer, as claimed in claim 30, and none of the prior art discloses the method claimed in claim 39 which includes the step of selecting a fibrous face layer that has legs dependent therefrom. Hence, independent claims 30 and 39 and dependent claims 31-38 and 40-54 are patentable over the cited prior art.